

VERMONT TELEGRAPH.

TWO DOLLARS PER ANNUM:

BY ORSON S. MURRAY.

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL."

[PAYABLE WITHIN FOUR MONTHS.]

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VERMONT TELEGRAPH.

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Writers in the Telegraph speak their views and sentiments on their own responsibility.—Ed.

For the Telegraph. CALL FOR DISCUSSION.

Friend Murray:—At the close of my remarks about ministers, in the last number of the Telegraph, I promised that in No. succeeding I would speak to ministers. And here it comes, such as it is with this appended introduction. And, Moral Reform is gaining ascendancy, BIBLE, CHURCH AND MINISTRY, being widely the topics of discussion, and a re-examination of sentiments, a re-examination of the world, spread throughout the world. Against the Church of Christ the gates of hell shall not prevail. And God will give a mouth and wisdom to His Ministers that their adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. Truth never suffers, but shines brighter, by investigation; does not fear, but solicits scrutiny. And were not the Scriptures intended, by several authors, to be understood? And are not intellectual powers adequate to that desirable end freely given us of God? If not, why said Jesus, "Whoso teacheth let him understand?" The Bibles were declared more noble, in that they searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so, that were preached.

TO THE CLERGY.

With due deference to the learned, and the honest minded, it is asked,—Are the ministers you teach, and for which you manifest such profound respect, the doctrines of the Bible? That most of you believe, I do not question—but is it possible they can be, seeing your views are at such variance? Of the various heresies, from Romanism, to Calvinism, to Universalism, that are preached—which the TRUE GOSPEL or Law of Christ? The sentiments you teach are the truth, or shall not bid you "God speed?" But if taught with error, which of you would not be corrected—be undeceived? There have been infinite divisions in Christianity, on the judgment, hence the GRAND DIVISIONS in Christendom, the punishment of the wicked, the Universalist, Restorationist, Destructionist and endless Misericordians.

A trial by the Bible of those four Gospels preached, is much desired by not a few in Christendom, and by men of no mean standing and character. People begin to think for themselves—to ruminate. Some look up as if their redemption from mental darkness drew nigh; some turn up the head and exhibit the spectacle of LIVING MEN—men of God, not of a paragon of the world. But to the point.

The writer is not convinced that the Scriptures reveal the view entertained by either, on the judgment. The gauntlet is thrown—let the leaders of the several vans put on the glove.

I am aware of the power you wield—the influence you exert,—your tact in argument—your oratory, to which the writer makes no pretence; but, relying on the idiomatic simplicity in which the sacred truths are penned, adopts the novel, and ancient course of question and answer, and a systematic order of investigation—thus maintaining a teachable disposition of mind and a good spirit, while as for hid treasure, we search for the TRUTH on the great theme of

LIFE AND DEATH, OR SALVATION AND DAMNATION.

First—To Universalists. Of you is so-called a passage that teaches the doctrine of a passage, viz. that "all men are happy and only happy after death."

Second—I ask the Restorationist to adduce a text that reveals the restoration doctrine; to wit that even in eternity the period will come when all men will be holy or happy.

Third—Let one from the various denominations who hold the endless misery system produce a passage, if it be but a solitary text, which teaches that endless torment is in any case the reward of the sinner of this life.

Fourth—Among the Christians, a people not beneath the various sects in understanding nor inferior in goodness, are those who preach the ultimate annihilation of the wicked. But I ask for a passage that, directly or indirectly, teaches the annihilation of any man.

Whoever shall take the affirmative of either sentiment, will see the propriety of commencing with the first text that teaches the doctrine he wishes to discuss; because, where any doctrine is first brought to view, it will generally be the plainest. And he, of course, will explain such passage in its connection, and in view of the attendant circumstances, and support his interpretation not by departing from, but in agreement with, the use of words, and with the customs of the day in which the things were spoken, and, comparing scripture, let the Bible be its own interpreter.

Then, theologians or laymen, to the test. Shrink not—trifle not, but hasten to the proof. Free discussion, candid investigation. Not for a victory in argument, but for the truth. And not with sectarian interests, but with the only inquiry, before the mind—what do the scriptures teach?

The order described, and condition, must, to receive attention, be observed by those who enlist,—for, whoever commenced the study of a science in the middle, that he might attain to a knowledge of its theory; or, of an arithmetic at the end, to know the astonishing power of numbers?

CEPHAS.

From the Liberator.

PROPERTY MEETINGS AT LYNN.

DEAR GARRISON:

A special meeting of "The Society of Universal Inquiry and Reform," to examine the influence which capital, monopolized as it now is by individuals, associations and governments, exerts upon society and reform, and to inquire into the rightful existence of that principle which allows of individual and absolute ownership in the soil and the products of labor, in contradistinction from the whole human family, was held in Lynn, on Saturday, Sunday and Monday, the 28th, 29th, and 30th of January, and continued, by adjournment, through Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, up to Thursday noon. Wm. Bassett, of Lynn, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Society, occupied the chair, and Sydney H. Gay, of Hingham, and J. A. Collins, were appointed Secretaries. The meetings were very fully attended, and the debates were animated and deeply interesting up to the close of the last session. John M. Spear, Campbell, C. L. Remond, Wm. Bassett, Jona. Buffum, Frederick Douglass, Geo. Bradburn, Oliver Johnson, James Boyle, Addison Davis, James N. Buffum, James P. Boyce, H. G. Wright, of England, Israel Buffum, Mrs. Gove, Drs. Brown and Kittredge, Thos. Davis, Wm. B. Earle, and others, participated in the discussions.

The first day of the Convention was mostly occupied in exposing the evils of the present social arrangements. Soon, however, the debates took a wider range. In urging a reorganization of society, as absolutely indispensable to the improvement and elevation of the race, the question very naturally arose—"How much is man indebted to society for the formation of his character?" The remainder of Saturday, and all of Sunday, was occupied in the evolution of this question. It was urged, on the one side, that men were the victims of institutions—that they inherited certain characteristics of mind, either favorable or unfavorable to mental or moral development—that they were thrown into virtuous or vicious society, and their minds imperceptibly and gradually, but positively moulded to the institutions around them, as really as was the foot of the female Chinese to the wooden shoe into which it was pressed, and all these under circumstances over which they had no control—that the old theological dogma of the inherent depravity of the race was a libel both on God and man—that the benevolent Creator had established laws, fixed and immutable, which, when obeyed, will bring us into perfect harmony with Him and the whole family of man—that society, as it now exists, is all false, with hardly a redeeming feature in it—that poverty and riches, scarcity and abundance, intelligence and ignorance, tyranny and servility, slavery, war, deception, fraud, disease, and premature death, are the legitimate fruits of the present state of society—that, from the necessity of the social arrangements, our interests cannot be identical, but must be diverse and antagonistical—that if we would better the condition of the people, we must so alter the external arrangements of society, that they shall harmonize with the natural wants and feelings of man. It was argued, on the other hand, with great

force and beauty, that man was the creator of institutions—that it was his own fault, if he became a victim to them—that his soul was so mysteriously connected with the Infinite, as to enable him, if he desired it, to overcome the influences of society, trampled on all human arrangements, and to bring himself into perfect harmony with Divinity. I regret, exceedingly, that notes of the remarks were not taken, that the conversation might be given to the readers of the Liberator.

On Monday, the following brief plan of reorganization was presented, with the view of bringing the subject of capital and its rights more directly before the Convention:

1. That competition is the legitimate fruit of the present social system.
2. That this system of competition is perpetuated by that principle which allows of individual and absolute ownership of the soil and its products.
3. That the *quid pro quo*, or equivalent system of exchange, necessarily produces inequality of possessions.
4. That from this inequality of possessions flow the various grades and castes which curse society with mental, moral and physical inequalities.
5. That slavery, war, theft, piracy, and governments of force and violence, are the products of the equivalent and accumulative system.
6. That the fraternity of the human family cannot practically be acknowledged while the system of individual and absolute possession is allowed.
7. That a community of interests and labor will alone supersede the necessity of competition, and all the collateral evils growing out of trade; as individuals combined together may resist the aggressions of the present false system of society, while a single individual could not; and thus enable the community to relieve all its members from want, ignorance and degradation.
8. That trade and commerce, the bane of civilization, can be superseded only by the ability of the community to produce every thing essential to its own wants.
9. That three hundred families are necessary to sustain all the agricultural, mechanical, scientific and educational departments of the community.
10. That scientific and mechanical power should be introduced, so as to supersede, as far as possible, the necessity of manual labor.
11. That it is important that the community should be located in a healthy region, and in the heart of a thickly populated country, with good mill privileges.
12. That a large dwelling, with factories, and other buildings, should be erected, with a view to health, taste, convenience and economy.
13. That since the soil, with all its products, is to be regarded as the joint property of the race, it legitimately follows, that the soil occupied by the community, and its products, should be considered the property of the whole family of man.
14. That to render industry attractive, every individual consumer in the community should, so far as health and circumstances will allow, become a producer.
15. That no test for membership should be instituted; but, when a vacancy is occasioned, any one who desires it should be entitled to enter the community.
16. That every one should be allowed to enjoy his or her own opinion, without proscription.
17. That all force, other than that of mind over mind, should be repudiated.
18. That it should be the object of the community to educate all the faculties of our nature; to secure to each one the highest individual immunity; to demonstrate to the world, in practice, that a better state of society may exist; that the excessive toil and the constant anxiety for present and future wants, now imposed upon all, both rich and poor, are unnecessary; and with a view, ultimately, of bringing society throughout the world into perfect harmony with the nature and wants of man.
19. That by virtue of this combination of interests, and the introduction of labor-saving machinery, labor may be reduced one half or three fourths; and thus the community might be enabled to sustain a large number of men and women, well supplied with periodicals and publications, who might advocate, without money, and without price, the great principles of reform.

Exceptions were taken to that portion of the report which denies the right of an individual to absolute ownership in the products of his own labor. No one defended the right of individual ownership in the soil, if my memory serves me correctly.

The question of private property occupied the remainder of the Convention. It was argued, by those friendly to individual possession, that appropriation, or the desire to appropriate objects, and to make them, as it were, a part of the individual self, was an attribute natural to man in every stage of society, and in every age of life—that private property is nothing else than the application of man's individuality to external things, or the realization and manifestation of man's individuality to the material world—that mine and thine were written upon the consciousness of every one—that the untaught fish in the ocean, or the fruit in the pathless forest, must be the property of him by whom they were first taken—that his title to them was complete and absolute, his own, to use and appropriate against the universe—that if the principle was adopted, that each member of the human family was an equal and joint proprietor of all the products of the earth, it must be apparent, to all discerning minds, that every industrious individual or community would, by these principles, invite hordes of lazy, worthless, starving bipeds, to consume every thing as fast as it was produced—that there could be no protection to any one, in the enjoyment of either the necessities or comforts of life, against the rapacity of the indolent millions—that private property was the only thing that would allow the gratification of individual taste—that the individual would be swallowed up in the community—and last, but not least, that a community of possessions would be the grave of individual liberty. It was admitted, on all sides, that the present social structure of society was false—that politics were unable to secure permanent relief—and that associating in communities was the only correct and philosophical instrumentality, to bring mankind into a more perfect state of society. It was considered, however, dangerous to strike at the right of individual property; but that a community, recognizing individual possession and accumulation, and rewarding labor, talent and capital in the following proportions, would render industry attractive, and would enable the laborers, ultimately, to become capitalists:

Labor should be rewarded,	5-12ths.
Talent " " "	4-12ths.
Capital " " "	3-12ths.

The property of the community should be divided into shares of from 10 to 100 dollars. Small shares should draw a greater percentage than the large shares to protect the laborer. It amounts to this:—The laborer draws about 41 cents for every dollar he earns—the overseers, merchants, clerks, teachers, &c., draw about 33 cents out of every dollar the laborer produces—and the capitalist who does nothing but consume the products of the working man, draws about 25 cents out of every dollar he produces. This is a prominent feature of the system of *Charles Fourier*, an eminent French philosopher. This system has been advocated in this country with considerable success, for the last three years, by Mr. Albert Brisbane, of New-York. This was no doubt a great advance in the old countries, where the laborer receives but about one-twelfth of the products of his own earnings, but it occurs to me that it will not satisfy the mass of inquiring, intelligent reformers of this country.

It was urged, on the other hand, that it was most evident, from the harmony and perfection of the laws of the material world—from the beautiful structure of our frames—from the wonderful adaptation of means to ends everywhere exhibited—and from the adaptation of the external world to meet the wants and desires of our species—that man was designed for the enjoyment of happiness in the present state of existence—that the first step to the attainment of this happiness is, that he should be guarded in the enjoyment of the necessities of life, that he might make himself acquainted with the laws and rights of his nature—that whatever necessarily tends to deprive him of this immunity, to throw him out of his natural orbit, to prevent him from cultivating the powers given to him for his own and

others' good, and thus to defeat the great end of his existence, is wrong, and should be instantly repudiated—that the soil, like the sun, air and ocean, is the joint and common tenancy of the race—that every individual is entitled to enough of each to satisfy his necessities—that man enters the world with certain wants, with physical energies and mind to guide those energies, competent to satisfy those demands—that if he is deprived of the soil from whence spring those things capable of satisfying his necessities, his right to existence is incomplete, and if he lives, it is not by right, but by sufferance—that if every one has an individual and absolute right to the products of his own industry, then no other person has any right to them, and it therefore follows, that the children, the sick, and the lame, and all those unable to produce, have no right to the necessities of life, and that such, if they are allowed to exist, must be regarded as paupers upon the benevolence and charity of others, and that the great end of man's existence hangs upon the mere contingency of individual capriciousness. It was also urged, that in consequence of this exclusive right to private property, the wealthy few had always been enabled to hold the lives of the masses in their hands—to bring such into subjection, and to make them the mere instruments to the gratification of their selfish passions—that these evils were not the mere accidental abuse of trust granted to property holders, but as necessarily and as legitimately grow out of it, as whips, chains, gags and all the horrors and impurities of the plantation follow the admitted right of one man to enslave another, or beastly intoxication, with all its concomitant evils, follows the admitted use of alcoholic drinks, or war and violence, from the principle of physical resistance—that exclusive possessions with exchange on the equivalent system, is a great wrong in itself, a *malum in se*. It was contended that governments, though ostensibly designed to protect life and person, were, in reality, but an instrument of property for its protection—that cunning and crafty ecclesiastical or political aspirants could, by the aid of wealth, virtually occupy the pulpits, dictate in the halls of legislation, sit upon the bench of justice, preside over literary institutions, govern the press throughout the country, and create a public sentiment in the land that should mirror forth themselves. It was also argued, that if appropriation be an attribute, natural to man, if by no means necessarily followed, that every object appropriated must be the individual and absolute property of the appropriator—that it is as common for children, before they learn, from the present social structure of society, the necessity of individual property as essential to protect them from want, and from the aggressions of others, to appropriate to themselves or others, certain stars, beautiful clouds, birds or animals, as dolls, hoops or other play things—that if "mine and thine" may be applied to objects too subtle and common to be converted into substantial property, and yet held in common, may not the goods of the earth, the necessities of life, be held on the same principle, without doing violence to the attributes of possession and appropriation?—that if the doctrine of appropriation be correct, (and it is not denied,) that principle must be false which will, when carried to its natural and legitimate results, allow, as in Great Britain, only one to every eight hundred of its inhabitants the privilege of appropriating soil to themselves, and multitudes from appropriating food sufficient to preserve life, but that that must be the correct principle which will allow every individual to appropriate to himself whatever is essential to his wants and comfort, and that will protect the weak, the ignorant and the derelict from the infringements of the avaricious, or, what is better, will destroy the ailment which feeds and keeps alive the principle of avariciousness.

In answer to the objection urged against a community of interests, that no one would be safe from the invasion of lazy, starving thousands, it was argued that this had ever been the prominent argument used by tyrants and usurpers, in all countries and ages, as a reason why the people should not have their rights acceded to them; that there was a universal want of confidence in the integrity and good feeling of the masses; that when powers given to him for his own and

partially recognized, the confidence reposed in them has never been abused; that there is enough produced, every year, to satisfy the necessities of all, if every one could be allowed to gratify their wants from the general abundance; that even in the present unsocial, selfish, isolated state of society, there would be no want or degradation, if men would regard the property of the earth as the children of Israel did the manna in the wilderness, "when they that gathered little had, no lack, and they that gathered much had nothing over;" that if the doctrine be true, that man has a positive and absolute right to the fruit of his own toil, it then follows that the poor and comparatively despised producers would come into possession of the wealth of the globe, and the rich, wise and refined consumers would be compelled either to labor, beg, or starve; that it must be evident to the most superficial observer, that gold, silver, houses, lands and stocks, cannot produce either the comforts or the luxuries of life, without the mind, bone and muscle of the producer; and then, by the principle laid down by the opponents, these products can, not become the property of the rich consumers, but of the producers.

The above is a very brief and imperfect sketch of the arguments advanced at the Convention. It has been my aim to state the strongest arguments of both sides fairly.

A committee was appointed to call Conventions to examine this question more at length, and to be held in New-England, New-York, and Ohio.

It was the wish of the Convention that you should publish the proceedings of this meeting in the columns of your paper. By so doing, you will oblige your sincere friend,

J. A. COLLINS.

Boston, 1843.

LETTER FROM BROTHER CAPRON.

Walworth, N. Y., May 15th, '43.

Brother Murray:—I am again at my old saying place, after having experienced a very pleasant ride from the city, where we had the pleasure of meeting such a host of free spirits in the meeting for Enquiry and Reform. Would to God that all societies had the object of earnest enquiry after all truth in view, instead of settling down in the base business of building up parties and sects, instead of going through a particular performance—singing particular things—wearing particular garbs—speaking particular language—all at particular times—and on particular days—and all to uphold particular creeds and confessions.

I know not why it is, but I hardly ever travel, or stay at home, but I fall in company with some body or something that helps to show more and more clearly the danger of relying upon professions. Facts are constantly coming up before me, which develop the gross imposition and iniquity practiced by the great sectarian organizations now existing, making pretensions to Christianity.

During my passage up, on the packet, I broached the subject of Christianity. There were several on board who were ready to defend slavery, war, breaking necks, &c., with all the concomitant evils of a government of force and fraud. It was somewhat ludicrous to see how they would occasionally turn from me, (their common enemy,) and go to quarrelling with each other about sprinkling, immersion, church government, &c. Among the most strenuous defenders of the strictest sect of pharisaical religion, was one freed from Lockport, who told me that if I should come into his church, (meaning I suppose where he went to offer sacrifice, for he was not a priest,) he would help drag me out if I preached my doctrine. I told him I thought if my views were so ridiculous he or his priest ought to be glad to have me expose myself to his criticism. Oh! said he, that would be lost time. But, said I, you frequently attack others in your sermons. Is that lost time? Oh! no, the preacher had a right to speak as he pleased.

I thought his avowal of his drag-out religion was as good proof as any rational person would ask, that he knew nothing of the spirit of Christ. After all, you will want to know what the practice of this man is; for I presume you, with me look more to that than beliefs merely. For his general character I cannot vouch, or even form an opinion far enough to judge. He is probably as correct as the